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ABSTRACT

This document reviews a study project on the state of graduate studies in political science in Canadian universities. Data collection were based on a review of graduate programs and a questionnaire sent out to graduate advisors. Results of the study indicate: (1) Canadian political scientists have a very favorable opinion of the quality of graduate education in political science offered in most Canadian universities. (2) There is substantial agreement among respondents as to the objectives to the Ph.D. program. (3) Two problems were indicated: inadequate staff at the senior level and inadequate financial support. (4) There is substantial agreement among respondents regarding the structure of the Ph.D. program. (5) The suggestion that the content of the Ph.D. programs was "out of tune with social reality" and lacked "social relevance" was dismissed. (6) There was agreement that the training of political scientists, for nonacademic careers, was a matter of low priority. (7) Many respondents were unclear about what the nonacademic marketplace consisted of. (8) Most respondents expressed the view that job opportunities did not appear to be an urgent problem. Tables of research findings are included. (MJM)

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C. P. S. A. NEWSLETTER

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William Badour

PROGRESS REPORT OBJECTIVES OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

BACKGROUND

The Executive Council of the C.P.S.A., at its meeting of June 4, 1970, entrusted me with the task of carrying out a study project on the state of graduate studies in political science in Canadian universities. The scope and content of this project was not defined but it was suggested that "a meeting of graduate advisors and graduate students from all universities would be useful" and that "this could be proposed to the Canada Council for funding." I reported to the November 1970 meeting that the Canada Council felt that such a study session should be funded by the Canadian Political Science Association. I also noted that references in the Secretary-Treasurer's annual report (1969-1970) to an "increasingly tight" market situation for Ph. D. graduates were rather difficult to confirm or refute given the paucity of hard data but noted that a survey of Canada Council Doctoral Fellows (1969-1970) showed that over 90% of those seeking employment in the field, in 1970, were assured of employment and only two candidates were in the doubtful category. These figures were not sufficiently comprehensive to draw firm conclusions but they did call into question the suggestion of a "crisis" situation in the area of employment opportunities. The Executive Council decided, at the November 1970 meeting, that the proposed general meeting of graduate student representatives and graduate student advisors should be shelved until adequate data about the state of graduate education in political science were available. I was then entrusted with the task of accumulating such data and presenting a report to the Executive Council. The March 1971 meeting of the Executive Council approved a schedule which I submitted. This schedule provided for a possible study session of graduate advisors and students, if justified, to be held in November 1971, upon completion of my data-gathering research. A final report was to be submitted, to the Executive Council, in February 1972, and the possibility of a panel discussion, on the report, was suggested for the Annual Meeting of the Association, in June 1972. A statement on the costs of the suggested November study session was to be provided at the meeting in June. I was unable to attend the June meetings of the Executive Council in St. John's as I was preparing a summer research trip at that time. The cost estimate of the proposed study is included in this progress report (page 19). A short summary of some of the results of a questionnaire which I sent out to graduate advisors is included along with a set of tables summarizing the results of this research.

It should be noted that some respondents failed to answer all of the questions. In some cases, it was not possible to give the departmental view, in others, respondents simply neglected to provide the desired information. Further, the survey provides a view of graduate education in political science as seen by staff and not by the students. All English language (or bilingual) universities received copies of the questionnaire. It was decided not to include the French language universities as this group merits a separate study.

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I. BASIC DATA

According to the survey, there are presently thirteen Canadian universities offering the Ph. D. degree. The University of Toronto has both the largest full-time staff and the largest number of graduate students in the department of Political Science. In terms of full-time teaching staff, Toronto University is followed by York, Queen's and Alberta. Toronto also leads in student enrollment at the graduate level (85), followed by McMaster (44) and McGill, Queen's, York and Alberta. An examination of table (1) will show that the projected admissions, for the year 1971-1972, are likely to level-off or decline slightly. Two universities, McMaster and Western, plan to activate their Ph. D. programs during the current academic year. Table (1) also shows that most of the universities, in the sample, tend to recruit at least two thirds of their Ph. D. candidates from among students who received their undergraduate training at other universities. These universities also, of course, have very active M. A. programs. The basic pattern is repeated at the M. A. level, but there are a number of notable exceptions. McMaster University, together with Dalhousie, York, Western and U. B. C., are much more active in awarding M. A. degrees than the Ph. D. McMaster university has been particularly active at the M. A. level in recent years awarding 31 degrees during the academic year 1970-1971. At the Ph. D. level, the number of degrees awarded both during the past year and during the last five years have been much smaller. Only three universities, perhaps four, granted more than one Ph. D. degree during the academic year 1970-1971. At least seven universities awarded no Ph. D. degrees at all during this period. The record of the five year period, 1966 to 1971, is, with the exception of Toronto, extremely modest. It is interesting to note that the primary method for the recruitment of graduate students is limited basically to the sending out of a brochure (with the accompanying letter) to other departments. Most universities do not appear to pursue active recruiting policies beyond this initiative. A substantial majority of respondents also felt that a national program of student evaluation for admission to graduate school at Canadian universities would not be desirable at this time.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE PH. D. PROGRAMME

There is a very wide consensus among respondents with respect to the desirable objectives of the Ph. D. programme. Ten of the respondents agree that the primary objective of a Ph. D. programme should be the training of political scientists whose primary commitment is to the creation and transmission of knowledge in our field. A substantial majority also agree that the training of political scientists, whose basic orientation is towards questions of public policy and social action, should be the second goal of a Ph. D. programme. Most of the respondents rank the training of political scientists with the skills required for a career in the non-academic market place as the least important of the enumerated objectives of a Ph. D. programme. Information was also elicited from respondents about the relationship between recruitment of graduate students and job opportunities (academic and non-academic)

offered by the market. The respondents were evenly divided about the extent to which the market influenced graduate enrollment at their universities. Six respondents claim that decisions regarding graduate enrollment at the Ph. D. level were not influenced by the market. A majority of the respondents nevertheless felt that the current level of enrollment was too high in Canadian universities. Only one respondent felt that enrollment was too low. Respondents were asked to assess the degree of difficulty encountered in placing graduates at the Ph. D. level. Universities with an active Ph. D. program appeared to have little difficulty in placing candidates with a Ph. D. degree. There was one notable exception, the University of Alberta, which appears to have experienced some difficulty in placing its Ph. D. graduates last year. The University of Alberta was the only university that encountered "increasing difficulty" in placing its graduates. All other respondents indicated that they had little difficulty in placing their Ph. D. degree-holders. For those Ph. D. candidates who had completed their Ph. D. comprehensive examinations and were seeking full-time academic positions, five respondents indicated that they encountered little difficulty in placing their students. Three respondents were confronted with "increasing difficulty" in placing such candidates while one university (Alberta) encountered great difficulty in placing its candidates. The relevant figures are provided in table (5). One university (York) appears to have made no effort to place its graduates. All respondents indicated that they recruited new staff members on the basis of an open competition.

The departments appear somewhat divided as to whether they should take the initiative in devising graduate programs which are more closely related to the non-academic market. Five respondents said yes and an equal number said no. A substantial majority agree that training graduates for the market place ranks no better than fourth among the possible goals of a graduate program. Additionally, nine respondents indicated that they did not have adequate knowledge about what the non-academic market was, its size, and what it required in terms of training and skills. Nevertheless, eight respondents felt that their graduate programs probably equipped the student with the skills he would require to get a job in the non-academic market!

Respondents were also asked to evaluate the extent to which their Ph. D. programs prepared students for a teaching career. A substantial majority felt that their programs did prepare the student academically. There was much less unanimity about whether the student received adequate pedagogical training. Five respondents felt that the teaching assistantship provided adequate training for a teaching career. The majority, however, were somewhat doubtful about the adequacy of the teaching assistantship. In spite of these misgivings, not one respondent thought that formal pedagogical training would be advisable. Finally, there was almost unanimous agreement that a non-Ph. D. "teaching degree" for students planning to teach in the community colleges or at the university undergraduate level was definitely not advisable.

III. THE GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

A high degree of consensus characterizes most of the answers regarding the Ph. D. programme in political science. Most of these programmes have undergone significant revision during the past five years. Further, the process of revision, in the majority of cases, seems to have been carried out unilaterally. Seven respondents answered that they did not consult colleagues at other universities prior to revision of their programmes. A substantial number of respondents also felt that they were "inadequately informed" about the development and changes in the graduate programmes at other Canadian universities.

The format of the Ph. D. degree is, with one exception, roughly similar at these universities even though nine respondents indicated that a high degree of uniformity in the formal requirements of the Ph. D. degree was not really necessary. In each university, with the exception of Toronto, the comprehensive examination is a formal requirement. In most cases, this exam covers three fields. In two cases, two fields are required. Nine respondents stated that a comprehensive examination should be compulsory. The dominant view among respondents was that the programme, at the Ph. D. level, should have a substantial degree of flexibility but there was a sharp division of opinion as to advisability of compulsory "core" or "field" courses. Five respondents favoured this, four were opposed and two were undecided. Most respondents agreed that the student should not spend more than two years preparing his comprehensive examination.

As far as the Ph. D. thesis is concerned, in all cases the thesis is written under the supervision of a thesis supervisory committee. This framework is considered quite satisfactory by all respondents. No respondent expressed the view that a thesis seminar might be useful at the Ph. D. level. The prevailing view among respondents was that the Ph. D. thesis should take about three years to write and the Ph. D. degree should require three or four years of full-time study after the M. A.

IV. THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE

Seven universities offering only the M. A. degree were added to the twelve universities referred to above to provide a broader basis for the survey of graduate education at the M. A. level in Canadian universities (see Table Two). Two of these universities, Victoria and Memorial, will initiate their M. A. programmes during the current year (1971-1972).

Respondents almost unanimously agree that the M. A. degree should continue as a valuable degree in its own right. Only one respondent expressed the view that the M. A. degree might be dropped. Most respondents also stated that the M. A. degree should, under no circumstances, require more than twelve months full-time academic work. Views about the content and formal requirements of the M. A. degree differ somewhat. Opinion is divided almost evenly as to the advisability of a terminal M. A. degree. Seven respondents

favour a terminal degree, six are opposed. A good majority of respondents do not feel, however, that a terminal M. A. degree should differ from a pre-Doctoral M. A. Among respondents favouring a terminal M. A., seven state that a thesis should be required for a terminal M. A. Only two respondents think that a thesis is an unnecessary requirement for this degree. A substantial majority of respondents consider the M. A. thesis desirable for students proceeding to the Ph. D. degree. Finally, six universities currently offer a terminal M. A. degree in political science.

V. STATUS OF GRADUATE EDUCATION IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Respondents were asked to rank the major weaknesses in graduate education in political science in Canadian universities at this time. The respondents were particularly concerned about two problems. They expressed the view that the major weakness characterizing graduate education in political science was the inadequate level of qualified staff at the senior level. Inadequate financial support for graduate students was ranked as the second major problem.

Other problems tended to be of a more parochial nature with the exception, perhaps, of complaints about the low quality of some students admitted to graduate school.

Finally, respondents were asked to compare the quality of training offered by their departments of political science, with that offered by four other departments in their respective fields. Table eleven conveys an image of high confidence in the quality and competence of political science training in Canadian universities held by Canadian political scientists.

VI. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The graduate programme survey appears to indicate the following:

1. Canadian political scientists have a very favourable opinion of the quality of graduate education in political science offered in most Canadian universities. Only one respondent expressed the view that the training offered by his department of political science was inferior to that offered by any one of the four other disciplines at his university mentioned in the survey!

2. There is substantial agreement among respondents as to the objectives of the Ph. D. programme.

3. There is substantial agreement among respondents concerning the major weaknesses or problems characterizing graduate education in political science in Canadian universities. Two problems stand out quite clearly:

a) Inadequate staff at the senior level

b) Inadequate financial support for students

4. There is substantial agreement among respondents regarding the structure of the Ph. D. programme.

5. The suggestion that the content of the Ph. D. programmes was "out of tune with social reality" and lacked "social relevance" was dismissed by most respondents as being itself irrelevant.

6. There was substantial agreement among respondents that the training of political scientists, for non-academic careers, was a matter of low priority at this time. This objective was ranked fourth by most respondents.

7. Many respondents were unclear about what the non-academic market-place really consisted of and gave contradictory answers to questions dealing with this problem (see table 4). No respondent thought this to be an urgent problem.

8. Though most respondents expressed the view that job opportunities did not appear to be an urgent problem, a majority felt that the level of enrollment, at the graduate level, was too high.

T A B L E O N E

UNIVERSITIES OFFERING THE PH.D. DEGREE AS WELL AS THE M. A. DEGREE

UNIVERSITY *Ph.D. programme begins 1971 -Ph.D. programme renewed 1971	Full-Time Staff	New Grad. Students Admitted 1970 71	Projected Admission 1971-1972	Admission to M.A. 1970-1971	Admission to PH.D. 1970-1971	% of Grad. Students Received Training at same University	M.A. Degrees Awarded 1970-71	PH.D. Degrees Awarded 1970-71	PH.D. Degrees Awarded 1966-71	Staff-Student Ratio at Ph.D. Level
TORONTO	53	85	80	58	27	33%	39	2	21	1 - 2½
McMASTER *	22	44	34	44	0	11%	31	0	0	-
McGILL	16	25	30	20	5	15%	8	2	6	1 - 2½
WESTERN -	24	25	30	25	0	33%	7	0	0	- - -
DALHOUSIE	14	23	--	22	1	20%	8	0	0	1 - 1
QUEEN'S	28	22	25	16	6	5%	12	2	--	1 - 1
YORK	33	18	20	10	8	33%	10	0	0	1 - 1
U. B. C.	25	16	20	14	2	31%	9	0	0	1 - 1
ALBERTA	26	15	15	10	5	25%	10	4	8	1 - 1
CALGARY	18	7	8	5	2	50%	3	0	0	3 - 1
SASKATCHEWAN	11	2	4	2	0	50%	0	0	0	5 - 1
SIMON FRASER	6	0	5	0	0	---	3	0	0	6 - 1
CARLETON	37	24	34	17	7	26%	13	2	4	- - -

TABLE TWO

UNIVERSITIES OFFERING THE M.A. DEGREE

UNIVERSITY	FULL TIME STAFF	NEW GRAD. STUDENTS ADMITTED 1970-1971	PROJECTED ADMISSIONS 1971-1972	ADMISSION TO M. A. 1970 - 1971	ADMISSION TO PH.D.	% OF GRAD. STUDENTS RECEIVED TRAINING AT SAME UNIV.	M.A. DEGREES AWARDED 1970-1971
Windsor	15	15	15	15	0	75%	3
Ottawa	15	24	25	24	0	75%	6
Waterloo	13	13	18	13	0	25%	7
Manitoba	18	15	16	15	0	75%	2
U. N. B.	9	2	5	2	0	50%	1
*Victoria	--	--	5	--	--	--	--
Memorial	9	--	3	--	--	33%	--

THE FOLLOWING UNIVERSITIES (COLLEGES) DO NOT OFFER A GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Brock University
Trent University
Lakehead University
Laurentian University

Royal Military College
Bishop's
Brandon University

Lethbridge University
Winnipeg University
Sir George Williams (?)

*M. A. Program begins 1971

TABLE THREE

OBJECTIVES OF PH. D. PROGRAMME

GOALS

1.	Creation and Transmission	-	Ten rank as primary goal
2.	Public Policy and Social Action	-	Seven rank as second goal
3.	Self-development	-	Seven rank as third goal
4.	Non-academic Market Place	-	Seven rank as fourth goal

TABLE FOUR

(Ph. D. only)

	Determined	Influenced	Not Influenced
Graduate Enrollment and the Market	0	6	6
	Too High	**About Right**	**Too Low**
Present Level of Enrollment	6	3	1
	Great Difficulty	**Increasing Diffic.**	**Little Diffic.**
Job-Finding Process	1	3	5

PROPORTION OF PH. D. STUDENTS NOT PLACED

	1970	1971
Toronto University	10%	10%
McMaster University	*N.A.	*N.A.
McGill University	0	1 of 4
Western University	--	0
Dalhousie University	*N.A.	*N.A.
Queen's University	0	0
York University	0	0
U. B. C.	1 of 4	1 of 3
Alberta University	1 of 3	3 of 4
Calgary University	1	0
Saskatchewan University	*N.A.	*N.A.
Simon Fraser University	*N.A.	*N.A.

*Not Applicable

DEPARTMENTAL INITIATIVE IN DEVELOPING PROGRAMS OF STUDY FOR THE NON-ACADEMIC MARKET PLACE
(Ph.D. only)

Department should take the Initiative: 5

Department should not take the Initiative: 5

	Very good Knowledge	Adequate Knowledge	Inadequate Knowledge
Staff Knowledge of Requirements of Non-Academic Market	0	1	9

	Yes	Perhaps	No
Ph. D. Program offers skills and Training required by Non-Academic Market	5	3	3

TABLE FIVE

(Ph.D. only)

TEACHING SKILLS

	Yes	No	?
Ph. D. Equips Student Adequately Academically	9	0	3
Teaching Ass't Adequate Training (Pedagogical)	5	4	3
Formal Pedagogical Training Advisable	0	5	4
Teaching Degree Should be Instituted	0	9	-

TABLE SIX

REVISION OF GRADUATE PROGRAMME

(Ph. D. only)

	Yes	No
Significant Revision During Past 5 Years	6	2
High Degree of Uniformity Desirable	0	9
Consultation Prior to Revision	4	7

	Well Informed	Adequately Informed	Inadequately Informed
Informed	1	3	6

TABLE SEVEN

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM
(Ph. D. only)

Comprehensive Exam Required:	Yes - 10 No - 1
Number of Fields for Comprehensive Exam:	One field - Two fields - 3 Three fields - 7
Comprehensive Exam should be Compulsory:	Yes - 9 No - 1
Flexibility of Programme:	Very flexible - 7 Fairly flexible - 4 Highly structured - 0
"Core" or "Field" Courses Compulsory:	Yes - 5 No - 4 Undecided - 2
Preparation of Comprehensive Exam - Time Suggested:	One year - 1 Two years - 7 Three years - 2

TABLE EIGHT

THE PH. D. THESIS

Thesis Committee Examines Project:	Yes - 10 No - 1
Ph. D. Thesis Seminar:	Yes - 0 No - 11
Ph. D. Thesis Superv. Committee:	Satisfactory - 10 Not Satisfactory - 0
Ph. D. Thesis Length of Time: (Suggested)	One year - 1 Two years - 0 Three years - 4 Four years - 1
Ph. D. Degree: How Many Years: Should this require after M. A.	Two years - 0 Three years - 5 Four years - 4

TABLE NINE

THE M. A. DEGREE

1. M. A. Degree should continue as Valuable Degree in its own Right:

Yes	- 14
No	- 1

2. M. A. Programs should be diversified even further:

Yes	- 9
No	- 1
Uncertain	- 5

3. Terminal M. A. Degree Advisable:

Yes	- 7
No	- 6
Uncertain	- 2

4. Terminal M. A. Degree Offered:

Yes	- 6
No	- 6

5. Terminal M. A. should differ from Pre-Doctoral M. A.:

Yes	- 3
No	- 9
Uncertain	- 3

6. Should Thesis be required for Terminal M. A.:

Yes	- 7
No	- 2
Not Applicable	- 6

7. Is M. A. Thesis Advisable for Student Considering Ph. D.:

Yes	- 9
No	- 2
Optional	- 4

8. M. A. Degree Should not exceed Twelve Months:

Yes	- 10
No	- 4
Uncertain	- 1

TABLE TEN

(M. A. + PH. D.)

MAJOR WEAKNESSES IN GRADUATE EDUCATION
IN POLITICAL SCIENCE (CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES)

	Number of Respondents Ranking Problems Among Top Three
Inadequate Qualified Staff at Senior Level	8
Inadequate Financial Support for Students	6
Inadequate Library Resources	3
Inadequate Control of Admissions	3
Inadequate Financial Support for Research	3
Inadequate Research Facilities	2
Poor Staff-Student Ratio	1

TABLE ELEVEN

(M. A. + PH. D.)

QUALITY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE TRAINING IN YOUR UNIVERSITY
AS COMPARED TO THAT OFFERED BY FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS

	Better	As Good As	Not As Good As
LAW	6	2	0
ECONOMICS	4	9	1
SOCIOLOGY	8	5	0
HISTORY	4	10	0